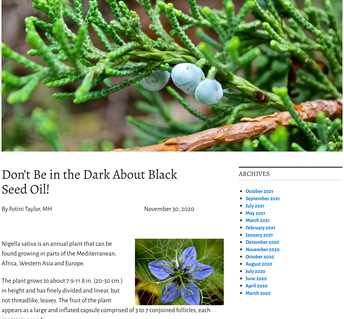

Don't Be in the Dark About Black Seed Oil!

By Fotini Taylor, MH

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Nigella sativa is an annual plant that can be found growing in parts of the Mediterranean, Africa, Western Asia and Europe.

The plant grows to about 7-9 in 8 in. (20-30 cm.) in height and has finely divided and linear, but not threadlike, leaves. The fruit of the plant appears as a large and inflated capsule comprised of 3 to 7 conjoined follicles, each containing seeds.

The seeds themselves are often used as a spice, and at times used as a replacement for black cumin (Bunium bulbocastanum). The flowers, comprising both female and male reproductive parts, can be blue or white in color. Caution should be taken to not confuse this plant with black pepper, black cohosh (Cimicifuga racemosa) black sesame or true cumin (Cuminum cyminum).

Nigella has been used for over 2,000 years as a natural remedy. Some reports indicate evidence that Nigella was found in King Tut's tomb. I wonder what he might have used it for.

Black seed oil is derived from pressing the seeds of the flower (Nigella sativa). The oil is dark yellow in color and very pungent to the taste, which is why many prefer taking the oil in softgel form rather than liquid.

Nigella's Benefits

A phytochemical component of the oil, Thymoquinone (TQ), bestows its antioxidant effects in cases of kidney and liver damage. Various medical studies involving use of the oil proved that it has the ability to protect the heart from damage and is valuable in the treatment of metabolic syndromes.

Studies conducted by the Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College in India concluded that black seed oil is more potent than antibiotics like Amoxicillin and Tetracycline in killing off multi-drug resistant and antimicrobial-resistant viruses like HIV, tuberculosis, malaria, and staphylococcus, and methicillin resistant staphylococcus (MRSA) to name a few. It is also known to surpass oregano oil (Origanum vulgare) in this department.

Similar studies also found that TQ prevents the growth of new blood vessels (angiogenesis inhibitor), making it valuable for tumor reduction. Its reserve of phytochemicals and antioxidants also make it beneficial in the prevention and treatment of leukemia, and breast cancer.

Further studies on Nigella in Croatian labs found that TQ, along with another component, thymohydroquinone (THQ), caused a 52 percent reduction in tumor cells.

Black seed oil's benefit on pancreatic cancer, as per research done at the Sidney Kimmel Cancer Center at Jefferson, found that the oil's thymoquinone component is responsible for killing off and inhibiting the proliferation of pancreatic cancer cells.

Regarding cancer treatment, black seed oil is also safe to use in combination with Cysteine, Vitamin E, and Saffron to ease the effects of the chemotherapy drug Cisplatin (Platinol – AQ).

Thymoquinone has also been found to interact with the body's opioid receptors that can in turn, minimize reactions to many food allergens. This is not surprising since this plant also has the capacity to relieve digestive and gastrointestinal issues such as dysentery, diarrhea, constipation, and hemorrhoids.

Complements of its TQ component, along with its noted immune boosting and infection treating effects, Nigella beneficial in cases of allergies, allergic rhinitis, and sinus congestion, along with colds, coughs and the flu.

However, the workings of this antiviral and anti-inflammatory don't end there! Black seed oil also supports the lungs, and is of great use in cases of emphysema and bronchitis. The phytochemicals in the oil also create an undesirable environment for fungus and molds to live in, making it a must for those with mold allergies.

Speaking of Nigella's virtues on the lungs and treating the flu – it has been suggested that the powerful TQ components of the oil may also be of benefit to those with coronavirus. My own thoughts regarding this would be black seed oil's positive effects on the lungs as in cases of tuberculosis and it's ability to fight off certain infections that antibiotics can't. The oil has also been effective in cases of malaria.

Tuberculosis and malaria have been two diseases whose effects have been termed as similar to coronavirus as well. It does make one think.

While studies haven't fully rolled out on black seed oil, a few COVID sufferers who have taken the oil noted significant improvements in their condition and recovery time.

For centuries, black seed oil has been useful in assisting headaches, toothaches, and conjunctivitis (pink eye). It has also a noted anthelmintic for intestinal parasites, as well as a flavoring for many foods – to cook with it would mean destroying all of its healing virtues. It also has noted results in lowering cholesterol and hypertensive conditions as well as relieving nausea. It is also useful in weight loss.

Nigella also promotes healthy liver function by protecting it from toxins that pass through the body. It also assists the pancreas by helping it to produce more beta cells, in turn regulating insulin levels, making it a good preventative against types 1 and 2 Diabetes, as well as for those who have it.

Black seed oil also boosts hair and scalp health as well as skin issues, like eczema. Thanks to the nigellone found in black seed oil, those suffering from different forms of alopecia or other infectious scalp issues can benefit from its use. The oil's antibacterial and anti-inflammatory natures assist in hair and scalp health by allaying dandruff and moisturizing the scalp.

Along with it's many other benefits, black seed oil can also assist those with fertility issues. Men with irregular sperm counts who took the oil were found to not only have an increase in sperm count and semen volume, but also better sperm motility.

A Few Uses of Nigella Sativum

A poultice made with the black seeds can be used for headaches, skin conditions such as boils, carbuncles, and joint pain (rheumatism).

When diluted with a carrier oil like grapeseed or almond oil, it can be used topically as a rub on the chest and back for respiratory issues. It's analgesic and anti-inflammatory virtues make a great fit for pain and muscle cramps.

A dilution of the oil can also make a beneficial liniment or massage oil.

A few drops of the diluted oil added to shampoo or conditioner an help to fortify hair and the scalp. Similarly, a few drops added to face cream or soap can assist with issues like acne and rosacea.

The oil (not heated, as it will loose its virtues) can add spice to all kind of recipes and drinks.

Summing It All Up

The powerful phytochemicals present in black seed oil have the ability to exact their effects on a myriad of diseases ranging from stomach issues and allergies all the way through to pain management, antibiotic resistant viruses and a wide range of cancers.

Black seed oil also holds its weight as an antihistamine, allaying many sinus and lung issues. It also supports digestion and can assist with food allergies as well assisting in cases of infertility.

Although enough research isn't out on the subject yet, my own thoughts lead me to possibilities for the oil as a natural solution for coronavirus.

The oil has a very pungent and pepper-like flavor. Those wishing to use it may find the softgel version a better option. If you are going to use the liquid form of the oil, always use cold-pressed to guarantee yourself a more pure product.

Black Seed (Nigella sativa)

Properties: Anthelmintic, Antihistamine, Antibacterial, Anti-fungal, Anti-emetic, Anodyne, Diaphoretic, Decongestant, Demulcent, Emmenagogue, Expectorant

Common Names: Black Caraway, Black Cumin, Cheveux de Venus, Fennel Flower, Kalonji, Nutmeg Flower, Fennel Flower, Roman Coriander, Small Fennel

Family: Ranunculaceae

Parts Used: Seed

Contraindications:

Due to its emmenagogue properties, the oil should be avoided during pregnancy and during breastfeeding.

Because of its blood thinning property, stop taking black seed oil two weeks prior to any scheduled surgery. Similarly, the oil is inadvisable for those with naturally low blood pressure and anemic conditions.

People on blood thinners or who have blood-clotting disorders, should not consume the oil, as it will increase the risk of bleeding.

Caution should be had by diabetics overusing black seed oil to reduce blood sugar levels, as the oil's effectiveness may reduce glucose levels to the point of hypoglycemia.

Keep the oil away from the eyes and mucous membranes.

The oil may cause a skin rash. Do skin tests before using topically and be certain that you don't have an allergy to the plant.

Consult with your physician before starting an herbal regimen.

Please be aware that this information is for educational purposes only, and is not intended to cure, diagnose or treat any illness. Seek a medical professional if you believe you need one.

Resources:

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